

*The Daughters of Shiloh: An Exploration of Judaism and Dance*

**An Honors Thesis (DANC 434)**

**by**

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### Abstract

*The Daughters of Shiloh* is a choreographed dance based on the story of the Benjaminites and the War of Gibeah, and how they captured women to be their wives, a Jewish story from the Book of Judges. Serving as a culmination of the author's training, the piece connects her Jewish heritage with her education in dance, and enabled her to develop her choreographic skills. The fully choreographed and produced dance work was presented in KDS, in Ball Gym, at Ball State University on December 9<sup>th</sup> through 11<sup>th</sup>, 2016. Included in this paper is an artist statement and the author's process in developing the story, the music, the costumes, the lighting and props, and the choreography. Visual materials include a link to the video of the performance, examples of the choreography, the program, the poster for the show, and archive photos.

### Acknowledgments

I would like to thank Anne Beck for advising me on this project.

I would like to thank the rest of the Senior choreographers for their work in putting together the Senior Choreography Projects show, *Moving Bodies*, where this work was presented.

I would also like to thank the dancers in my piece for being willing to work in a way and in a style, that was probably very new and different, and for their hard work and wonderful performance.

Lastly, but certainly not least, I would like to thank my mother for paying for all the dance lessons that have gotten me where I am today and for supporting me through every decision.

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## **Process Analysis Statement**

### Artist Statement

*The Daughters of Shiloh* represents the culmination of what I have learned in college. The idea for this piece came from a desire to create something that combined two of the main things that define me, being a dancer and being Jewish. In this work, I conveyed a story related to Judaism through dance, and incorporated a variety of styles that I have learned at Ball State, including ethnic, ballet, jazz, and modern dance. In addition, this work enabled me to develop my choreographic and teaching skills, which in turn makes me a better dancer.

### Intro

*The Daughters of Shiloh*, a choreographed dance, was created in order to blend the two things most important in my life, Dance and Judaism. In creating this project I was able to employ all I have learned in my major, dance. This project was the culmination of all the work I have put in in the past 4 years.

As a dance major I am required to complete a senior capstone project. Most seniors choose to participate in the Senior Choreography Projects, produced and choreographed by the Senior dance majors, as their capstone project. Even though I will be graduating with a BS and was not required specifically to participate in the Senior projects, I chose to do in order to complete the requirements for my Honors Thesis and my capstone project. In addition, I wanted to be able to present my choreography in a formal, produced show. I wanted to continue to develop and work on my choreographic skills and teaching abilities. In a more personal motive, I felt that my participation in the show would help me feel closer and more like a part of the rest of



senior class. I chose to double up on the credits, counting the senior choreography projects as my Honors 499, due to class credit space constraints in my schedule.

I am Jewish and in college I have struggled with how to balance my Jewish identity and dance. I wanted to be able to present choreography that represented who I am as a person and the reflected the training and increased knowledge of dance I have received here at Ball State.

Judaism is something that is extremely important to me and I felt it was necessary to bring this to the stage. I also wanted to create something very different from what everyone else would be doing and from what I felt was expected from me, the “ballerina.”

### The Story

Keeping in mind my desire to connect my Judaism and my dancing, I decided to select a Jewish theme for my piece. I chose to focus on the biblical story of the daughters of Shiloh from Judges: 20-21. While this story is in the bible, it is in a lesser known section, known as *The Prophets* in English. Despite this, I felt this story lent itself well to dance because of the rise and fall of action present within it. This was one of the first ideas I came upon. I did look for other concepts related to Judaism, but this idea of the Daughters of Shiloh stuck with me, as if calling me to make a piece about it. The passage this work is based on discusses the war of Gibeah (in the territory of the tribe of Benjamin), and the daughters of Shiloh. After a war among several tribes of Israel, 200 of the men of Benjamin, who had lost, were in need of wives. However, men of the other tribes had vowed not to give their daughters away in marriage. They proposed that the Benjaminites go to the vineyards at Shiloh, where 200 virgins were dancing in a religious festival for the Lord, and take wives for themselves. They did so and were able to go back to their land and propagate their tribe.

The story line was altered to make it less sexist. I tried to convey that the girls listen to the boys' story and make the boys listen to their own desires. In addition, since there were not 200 females and 200 male dancers in the department, the piece was scaled down to include just 5 female dancers, and two males. The dancers were picked from a collective audition held by all the seniors producing pieces for the show. Each performer was limited to participation in three pieces and was selected based on the desire of the choreographers to have them in their piece. I chose my dancers because of their abilities to stretch through their whole bodies, and dance in a balletic way. The males were chosen because I knew I had to have males in my piece to make the story work, and there were only two that auditioned. Below are brief synopses of the storyline, by scene:

Scene 1: Worship. Five females enter with baskets of grapes. They form a circle and their motions convey that they are worshipping G-d in thanks for the grapes. The worship is the first part of the festival that they are celebrating

Scene 2: Cut to two men with bows fighting in war. They are of the tribe of Benjamin, which is at war with the other tribes of Israel. One man is nicked in the shoulder. Soon it's clear the danger has passed, yet they have lost the war. The men pick up their bows and run through hills, stopping to pray to G-d, before hearing faint music trickling through the air.

Scene 3: Cut back to the girls. They enter from picking grapes and form a circle to dance in celebration of the festival. They weave around, in and out, dancing for joy.

Scene 4: The Capture. The men, having spotted the females dancing, and thinking they could really use some wives after the rough war they faced, burst onto the scene and each grab a female dancer. Chaos ensues as the girls fight the men. Eventually the men calm

the girls enough to tell them their sad tale. One female gathers the others and tells them of the men's bravery and love. The two leads accept the males love.

Scene 5: Acceptance. The two main couples dance. The females demand respect while the males beg for their love. Then the males dance showing off their strength. Everyone joins together slowly.

Scene 6: Celebration. One of the males calls everyone to dance again, celebrating the union of the happy couples. Everyone forms a circle and joyfully dances around.

### Music

The music was chosen to reflect the Jewish themes of the dance, as well as to express the changes in the story arc. Choosing the music was quite a challenge because many pieces do not reflect changing moods over time. I knew that I wanted instrumental music, because I did not want lyrics guiding my movements, especially as I already had a rough outline of my story line. One artist I liked was Ennio Moricone. His music connected to the Jewish concept, with many pieces relating to biblical figures. However, much of his music, though orchestral in nature, came from the soundtracks of various movies. In addition, most of his songs were slow and lacked the changes I desired. As a last resort, I asked my dad (Jewish Orthodox, librarian) if he had any CD's I could possibly borrow and listen to for ideas. Luckily, he had two options that I thought would work, one with music by Shostakovich, and *Authentic Israeli Folk songs and Dances*.

After listening to both I settled on *Authentic Israeli Folk Songs and Dances* because the songs were upbeat for the most part, and most did not have lyrics. I then came up with a list of five songs I thought would work, but I was still unsure of the specific order of the pieces, especially which song would be used for the finale section. At my first rehearsal with my dancers



I had them listen to all five pieces. Then, I narrowed it down to the four I ended up with, kicking out one of the songs. Next, I set the order of the songs according to my story line that I had further developed at this point. The songs used were: *Sadot Sheba'emek* (Fields of the Valley), *Hava Netze Bamacho* (Let Us Go to the Dance), *Drums solo*, and *Simchat He Amel* (The Joy of the Worker). The first song is slow and smooth and worked well for the worship section at the festival the female dancers were attending in the first scene. The second song was a sparse drum solo that I felt elicited the feeling of war, as the male dancers were fighting in the mountains in this scene. I cut the *Drum solo* song at :52 seconds in, as the music shifted and became quieter there. The third song reflects the joy that the female dancers felt as they celebrated and danced during the festival. I cut the third song at about 2:35min, because of the way the song changed and added in the rest of drum solo next, continuing from the :52 second mark, for the capture of the females by the males. The drums continued to play as the girls fought the boys and then learned their story. The next song slowed down again, reflecting the performers' desire for acceptance and connection. The last song reflected the joy the dancers felt after the two couples have accepted each other. I felt that I needed to cut the pieces in order to get the music to go along with and help tell the story I was trying to get across. At first, I cut the music very roughly myself. Later I had the departmental accompanist, Adam Crawley, help me cut the music. As our accompanist and a professional musician, he is very knowledgeable about music and how to cut it together to make it sound good. The final cut worked very well to convey the story.

### Costumes

I had a lot of trouble finding appropriate costumes. I knew I wanted white for the female dancers to reflect the virgin status of the females in the story. I also knew I wanted long sleeves

to reflect the concept of modesty in Judaism. Finding the combination of these two for under \$30 was almost impossible. Originally, I had desired for my dancers to wear a long sleeved white leotard with lace and a single panel tulle skirt down to the floor. This proved far too expensive.

After scouring every web-site I could think of, and checking the costume shop in Ball Gym, I settled on a short, tunic-like, white cotton dress with three-quarter sleeves available through Amazon<sup>1</sup>. All my female dancers accepted this dress. I ordered two barely different styles, one with one little ruffle at the bottom of the A-line skirt, and the second with 3 faux-tiers stitched down the skirt. The dancers wore nude leotards and black spandex shorts underneath, that they already owned, for modesty and comfort.

For the male dancers, I wanted them to look like they were fighting a war, but not to be in full battle gear, or long tunics like ancient Israelites really would have worn, as those would have restricted their movements. I settled on khakis, because they are a neutral color and both boys had pairs they could dance in. Shirts were harder. I initially wanted something very neutral, like brown or off-white, but I could not find anything I liked. One of my dancers brought in a brownish-red T shirt that was just rough enough to work. I decided that both male dancers would wear very similar shirts, which they provided, to match and for the costume not to take too much attention away from the female dancers and the dancing itself. The muddy red shirts contrasted the white that the females had on, while also reflecting that the men had been fighting up in the mountains. The dancers were all barefoot, because the Israelites in this story most likely would have been barefoot or in simple leather sandals. The girls were specifically barefoot to express their connection with the earth and the harvest it provided.

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<sup>1</sup> [https://www.amazon.com/gp/product/B01F7WPDHU/ref=oh\\_aui\\_detailpage\\_o09\\_s00?ie=UTF8&psc=1;](https://www.amazon.com/gp/product/B01F7WPDHU/ref=oh_aui_detailpage_o09_s00?ie=UTF8&psc=1;)  
[https://www.amazon.com/gp/product/B01F7W3RUU/ref=oh\\_aui\\_detailpage\\_o09\\_s00?ie=UTF8&psc=1](https://www.amazon.com/gp/product/B01F7W3RUU/ref=oh_aui_detailpage_o09_s00?ie=UTF8&psc=1)



### Props/Lighting

I chose to use props in order to help convey the setting, time-period, and activities of the characters in my dance. The Book of Judges tells us that the females were celebrating a festival to worship G-d in the vineyards, and so I decided that I wanted grapes and baskets in order to express the fact that the female dancers were in a vineyard. These props helped to reveal the purpose of the females' worship, and later, their joyful dancing. The males needed a prop to reveal that they were soldiers fighting in a war. Armor would have been clunky, and not era appropriate. Since the Israelites in ancient Israel typically used bows-and-arrows, it seemed natural to find these props to use for my piece. In deference to safety, I decided that we would only use the bows and not any real arrows. This way the illusion remained clear, without the risk of anyone getting hurt. After searching in vain for appropriate baskets online, I asked if I was allowed to use props from the Department of Theater and Dance's prop shop. Permission granted, I got in touch with the prop master, who willingly let me in the shop and let me take whatever I needed. I selected five baskets, one for each of my female dancers, took all the grapes present, and took the two bows shown to me.

One issue we had with the props was that the grapes kept falling out in the first section of the dance. Many solutions were attempted, including Velcro dots, double sided tape, and will-power. In the end, I tied the grapes to the baskets and each other using brown embroidery threads. This method was successful. I chose to have the props be left on the stage for the celebration scene, and the rest of the work, to create the illusion of the dancers being in the vineyard. The props enabled the audience to maintain the understanding of where the dancers were.

The lighting design came relatively late in the process. I presented my lighting designer with an outline of my story, divided into six scenes (as listed above). Before this process, I had very little knowledge of what lights looked like from the audience perspective, but my designer was very nice and helped me. The lights changed several times throughout the piece. The first scene featured mostly white lights that came up slowly with the entrance of the dancers. The second scene was mostly in red, to indicate the war. The third scene, being more vibrant and lively, had more color, with the lights fully up. At the moment of the capture the lights quickly turned to red. In the fourth section the lights shifted to dim violet top lights and white side lights. In the final scene, the lights faded as the dancers walked off. The lighting design helped to further convey the emotions and setting of the story.

### Choreography

Developing the choreography for this piece was quite challenging. I wasn't sure what I wanted in terms of movement style, but I knew it wasn't going to be strict ballet, given all the styles and forms of dance I have been privileged to learn here at Ball State. In the creation of this piece I found inspiration in Israeli folk dance and the foundation in Ethnic dances I have learned here. I didn't think that I would utilize folk dance at first, but it fit well with the concept and my desire to merge my Jewishness with dance. The movements I created were inspired by the storyline that I developed from the original biblical story, as well as by my music. I researched Israeli folk dances, and the details behind my concept story. In addition, I looked up small movement details, like how someone would react if they were shot in the shoulder, and ballet partnering terminology.



I began my choreographic process by working alone in the studio to come up with a short phrase and investigating some ballet mime (such as pointing to the ring finger to indicate marriage). At the next rehearsal, I tried out my phrase on the dancers. After teaching them the phrase I developed it, by having them learn it on the other side and try it out in different groups. This phrase developed into the opening of the dance, with some additional changes, such as each group doing a different leap through the air. Early in the process I worked with my dancers to come up with various partnering ideas. My dancers were very helpful in this area, especially the males.

Because this piece is based on a Jewish theme, I decided to include circle patterns, which are commonly used in Jewish weddings to dance the Hora. After researching basic Israeli folk dance steps, I played with different ways for the dancers to move in the circles. A common step throughout the dance was the grapevine. To add interest to the inward facing circle typical of the Hora, I added variations and had the dancers run into the circle, coil and then uncoil, and weave through each other at various points in the work.

For the male dancers, I wanted strong, masculine movements, as well as to incorporate the action of a bow and arrow. Their part of the dance changed a little towards the end of the process, as what I had first choreographed seemed a little too joyful. As the men represented the Benjaminites of the story, who had lost the war, the movements I had felt wrong. I took out a sauté arabesque with a fist pumping into the air, and replaced it with both hands sweeping out to indicate "all clear," rather than "victory." I also had the dancers kneel on the ground and sway back and forth in prayer.

I tried to plan a lot of the choreography before my rehearsals, so that I felt prepared. Having steps to work from was helpful, but I often found that what I worked on at home did not

work well in the studio, whether because of space, counts, or the dancers not understanding the steps. In the partnering sections, I felt a lot more open to experimentation and seeing what the dancers could do, due to my limited experience in partnering. I found it quite challenging to create the scenes where the whole group was dancing, but were doing different things. At first I tried to picture it all in my head, but that did not go very well. So, in rehearsal I built up the section piece by piece, adding details and movements throughout the process. For example, the quiet section after the capture scene started with an idea for the three ensemble members to lower into Table T's (a Horton movement where the body is flat, parallel to the floor, with one leg supporting). I built off this and added in the other performers in a canon. Earlier, in the capture sequence, I worked by focusing on my lead performers first, and just telling the others where they should stand. We worked together on various lifts and how the female dancers would show that they were angry. Slowly I added in what the dancers in the back were doing. One performer reached out with her arms and leg and then circled her body back around to neutral, repeated this to the other side, and then ran over to the third ensemble dancer, who was on stage left. This dancer laid down on the ground and hit it, like a toddler having a crying fit, in reaction to the capture of her fellow dancers.

The most challenging choreography, was what seemed the simplest to me at first. For the finale section, I had a lot of trouble with the counts, and with the steps matching up to the music. When I first choreographed the section, which began with skipping grapevine walks and step touches, it made perfect sense to me, and I honestly wasn't worried that it did not match the music perfectly. After teaching my dancers the steps, they did not agree with me on the counts. I tried several methods to work on the counts, including showing it to them exactly as I wanted it



while counting, and having them try to count it out and figure out how many steps were necessary. We ended up with seven walks and not eight after a lot of struggle.

As the choreographic process went on, I opened myself up to coming up with movement in the studio, as well as allowing the dancers to offer their input into what felt right. This was challenging for me, but I feel that it helped the piece, because I was responded more naturally to the story I created than I had been before. I added some things to the dance after seeing the dancers play around with ideas. Suggestions from my advisor, and other professors, helped me put a more critical eye to why my dancers were doing certain movements or in certain formations. Listening to what they said helped me to clarify my piece.

Overall the choreographic process was quite a challenge, but I really enjoyed the opportunity to create something in this way. I feel that some of the movement ended up very balletic, which was not my original intention. I think that stemmed from my training as a ballet dancer before college. Those movements did work for the piece because it was a linear story, which is essentially what a ballet is. The movements I created were inspired by the storyline that I developed from the original biblical story, as well as by my music. The choreography for this piece ended up as a mix of ballet, jazz, Israeli folk dance, and more.

#### Why it Matters

This project matters because dance is not just modern and contemporary, despite how popular these dance forms are here and around the world. Dance needs to tell a story. It needs to make the audience think and feel something. The audience doesn't have to understand the minutia of the story, but they must be able to glean enough information to understand the plot or concept. This project was important in helping me grow as a choreographer, which in turn will



help me grow as a dancer and a leader in society. This project matters because it proves that I can apply what I have learned in my dance and academic classes and expand outside of them with the skills I now have, in order to create a dance. This piece incorporated folk dance, ballet, jazz, and modern styles, reflecting what I have gained in the dance studio. On a deep personal level, this project matters because it allowed me to feel as if I was actually a part of the senior class, something I struggled with because I started the dance program late. This project matters because I was able to introduce my dancers and the audience of the show to something they might have been unfamiliar with. I educated them about my culture, about a culture that is more prevalent in the US than most realize.

This project served as a culmination of everything I have learned from my major. The piece brought together elements from choreography class, costume design, modern, ballet, ethnic, jazz, and more. I used my skills from my history minor to research the story, and research dances and ideas to help me develop my work. There is no way I could have created something like this as a freshman. With this project, I displayed the many skills I have learned, and am working on. This includes selecting and putting together music, creating dance from scratch, using elements of known dance forms in new ways, and preparatory work. I had to use my improved dance skills to show and teach the steps. This work reflects how far I have come, from being the girl who had only really studied ballet and little else growing up, to a dancer with a wide range of dance abilities and skills.

## Performance

All media is included with permission of the dancers. (See permission slips in Appendix)

### Video

<https://youtu.be/iT10ddPM9pY>

### Choreography

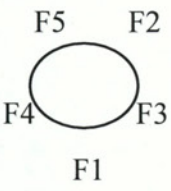
Below is an excerpt of the choreography to demonstrate the choreographic process. Counts are included to the best of the choreographer's ability and according to what was written down in her choreographic journal. Disclaimer: Some steps in the written version of the dance may be different than what was actually performed due to last minute changes and the difficulty in recording the ephemeral art of dance via the written word.

L = left R = right

Scene 1: Music is in 6/4

Who/Stage Directions	Female 1	Female 2	Female 3	Female 4	Female 5
Enter farthest upstage R  Piece starts at 0:00  Hold basket as comfortable  As if picking grapes  Hand not holding basket, invite other girls to "dance"	4 runs, leap of choice, pas de bourré en tournant R arm up, step, pique L to battement enveloppé R to downstage L while R arm reaches up two times, step to B-plus, wave one arm in to out	(Offstage L)	(Offstage R)	(Offstage L)	(Offstage R)
F3 and F5 enter from farthest upstage L  F3 and F5 execute an Italian pas de	Repeat combo starting L with no change of direction on enveloppés.	(Offstage L)	Execute combo F1 did, starting L with no change of direction on enveloppés.	(Offstage L)	Execute combo F1 did, starting L with no change of direction on enveloppés.



chat on the leap					
F2 and F4 join, enter from farthest upstage L; execute stag jump on the leap  All girls dance in unison	Repeat combo starting R with the original change of direction; no "dance" motion, detourné to face center	Execute the combo starting R with the original change of direction; no "dance" motion, detourné to face center	Repeat combo starting R with the original change of direction; no "dance" motion, detourné to face center	Execute the combo starting R with the original change of direction; no "dance" motion, detourné to face center	Repeat combo starting R with the original change of direction; no "dance" motion, detourné to face center
All together; acknowledge each other  	Take 6 steps to form a circle; walk in RLRL on counts 1234 bringing arms up together palms up, bring arms down palms down as step 4 steps LRLR on 5612	Take 6 steps to form a circle; walk in RLRL on counts 1234 bringing arms up together palms up, bring arms down palms down as step 4 steps LRLR on 5612	Take 6 steps to form a circle; walk in RLRL on counts 1234 bringing arms up together palms up, bring arms down palms down as step 4 steps LRLR on 5612	Take 6 steps to form a circle; walk in RLRL on counts 1234 bringing arms up together palms up, bring arms down palms down as step 4 steps LRLR on 5612	Take 6 steps to form a circle; walk in RLRL on counts 1234 bringing arms up together palms up, bring arms down palms down as step 4 steps LRLR on 5612
F2 and F5 in unison; F1, F3, and F4 in unison	Turn over R, L leg in B-plus on 3456, to come to L knee, brush up arms from floor on 123 palms up, brush down on 456 palms down	Step back to L leg in B-plus on 3456, brush up arms bending at mid back on 123 palms up, brush down on 456 palms down	Turn over R, L leg in B-plus on 3456, to come to L knee, brush up arms from floor on 123 palms up, brush down on 456 palms down	Turn over R, L leg in B-plus on 3456, to come to L knee, brush up arms from floor on 123 palms up, brush down on 456 palms down	Step back to L leg in B-plus on 3456, brush up arms bending at mid back on 123 palms up, brush down on 456 palms down
	Swing R leg back to double attitude on 123 with arms opening from 5 <sup>th</sup> to 2 <sup>nd</sup> , grab	Circle L leg on 1 to step on to attitude penshé on 2 R arm R leg up L arm in second on 34,	Swing R leg back to double attitude on 123 with arms opening from 5 <sup>th</sup> to 2 <sup>nd</sup> , grab	Swing R leg back to double attitude on 123 with arms opening from 5 <sup>th</sup> to 2 <sup>nd</sup> , grab	Circle L leg on 1 to step on to attitude penshé on 2 R arm R leg up L arm in second on 34,

	“grape” from L side with R hand, arc and reach in semi-circle to L on 45, smash palms on 6, spread on ground palms down for 6 counts	step R out to grand plié in second on 5, pivot over to L to smash palms on and 6, spread arms open for 6 counts while pivoting to grande plié in second and hold arms straight in second position	“grape” from L side with R hand, arc and reach in semi-circle to L on 45, smash palms on 6, spread on ground palms down for 6 counts	“grape” from L side with R hand, arc and reach in semi-circle to L on 45, smash palms on 6, spread on ground palms down for 6 counts	step R out to grand plié in second on 5, pivot over to L to smash palms on and 6, spread arms open for 6 counts while pivoting to grande plié in second and hold arms straight in second position
Like an upturned second	Accent on 1 – raise torso palms up, slight arc in arms	Accent on 1 – Relève in second, palms up, slight arc in arms, head looks up	Accent on 1 – raise torso palms up, slight arc in arms	Accent on 1 – raise torso palms up, slight arc in arms	Accent on 1 – Relève in second, palms up, slight arc in arms, head looks up
The girls exit, having finished their worship, and go off to pick grapes	Cross R front to sit up, grab basket and get up on 4, 2 walks on 12, coupé turn 34, jeté attitude on 56, acknowledge and walk off 12 stage R	Come down to grab basket reaching over to it on the R on 4, 2 walks on 12, coupé turn 34, walk 561234, acknowledge and walk off 56 stage R	Cross R front to sit up, grab basket and get up on 4, 2 walks on 12, coupé turn 34, coupé jump on 12, acknowledge and walk off 34 stage L	Cross R front to sit up, grab basket and get up on 4, 2 walks on 12, coupé turn 34, coupé jump on 12, acknowledge and walk off 34 stage R	Come down to grab basket reaching over to it on the R on 4, 2 walks on 12, coupé turn 34, walk 561234, acknowledge and walk off 56 stage L



Scene 2: (No counts – dancers should try to feel the music, and listen for the changes in drum sounds)

Who/Stage directions	Male 1	Male 2
Enter from back wing stage L  Scene begins at 1:37 min	Step out from wing, deep lunge with L, pulling on bow  Step R to roll on butt (L arm leads), roll to stomach flat, arch R leg over back, get pulled up by Male 2 getting pulled behind.	Short hold Lunge, soutenu to barrel turn,  pick up Male 1 with R arm flinging him back
Shot occurs on music change at :17  Male 2 lies with head towards stage R body to stage L	Looks behind; flexed developpe at knee, to half turn, to hold lunge with bow and arrow pulled	Slowly rise, with pulled bow and arrow look back and forth (R, then L), at full rise – shot in L shoulder, roll to knees, fall wrist, elbow, shoulder
M2 is ok – it was just a scrape	Pencil turn 1 ½ to spot Male 2, stop, drop bow, leap in second with hands up over Male 1 to crouch downstage L with back to audience  Lift M2's R shoulder to check it, brush it, nod after M2 looks at M1, offers hand to god (up), then helps M2 up	Lay still   Nod to M1  Arise, stay low in plie
The men are in the clear, but they have lost the war  M2 realizes his shoulder is ok	Step up onto L, 4 runs RLRL to downstage R, L foot back in tendu, hand to eyes “look” RLR, brush both hands out (wipe at just below breast level), cross R over L to sauté arabesque L arm up	Nurse shoulder, look around expectantly  Close 5 <sup>th</sup> , tour en l'air R arm up
M1 indicates to M2 that they should leave	Run back to M2, swipe arms across, then with L arm, draw from below to push towards stage L	Looks to M1
M2 should end up stage right of and in line with	Grab weapon; run to far upstage R via large circle around	Grab weapon; run to far upstage R via large circle around



M1		
Arm up is to indicate "let us pray"	Tap M2 on shoulder, raise R arm to god; both men kneel and pray swaying forward 3 times hands clasped	Acknowledge M1, kneel to pray
M1 hears faint music in the distance; M2 then does too  End at 2:29 min	Roll over R shoulder to stand up R hand to ear Run off middle wing stage R	Roll over R shoulder to stand up  Sees M1, also puts R hand to ear  Run off middle wing stage R

Program

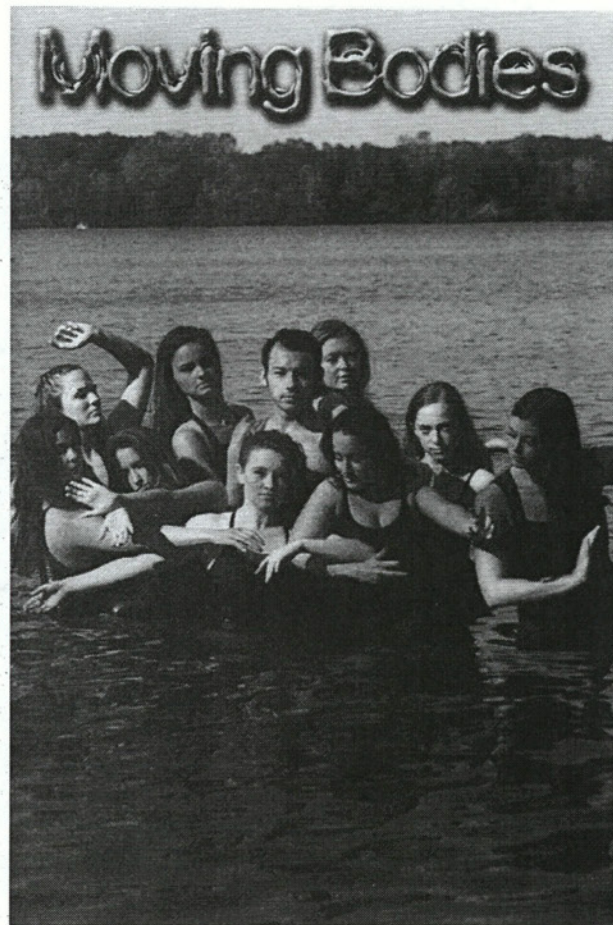


Fig. 1 – Front of Program

Ball State University, The College of Fine Arts, and the Department of Theatre and Dance Present:	
<b>Moving Bodies</b>	
Choreographers:	Samantha Conte Lauren Cougan Christina Fee Lyle Oberman Lacy Smith Adina Stuhlman Cody Thomas Emily Utz Rachael Wiczorek
Production Advisor:	Audra Sokol
Advisors:	Anne Beck Susan Koper Rebecca Pappas Audra Sokol Michael Worcel
Co-Stage Managers:	Lexi Facemyre Grace Hill
Lighting Designers:	Amanda Boldt Savannah Cousins Nicole Popovich
Photographers:	Madeline Curtis-Long Kip Shawger
Pre-Show Music:	Adam Crawley
Crew:	Emmi Hanneline Jessica Lawrence Jakob Winter Haley Wolf
Catering:	University Catering

Fig. 2 – Production Roles

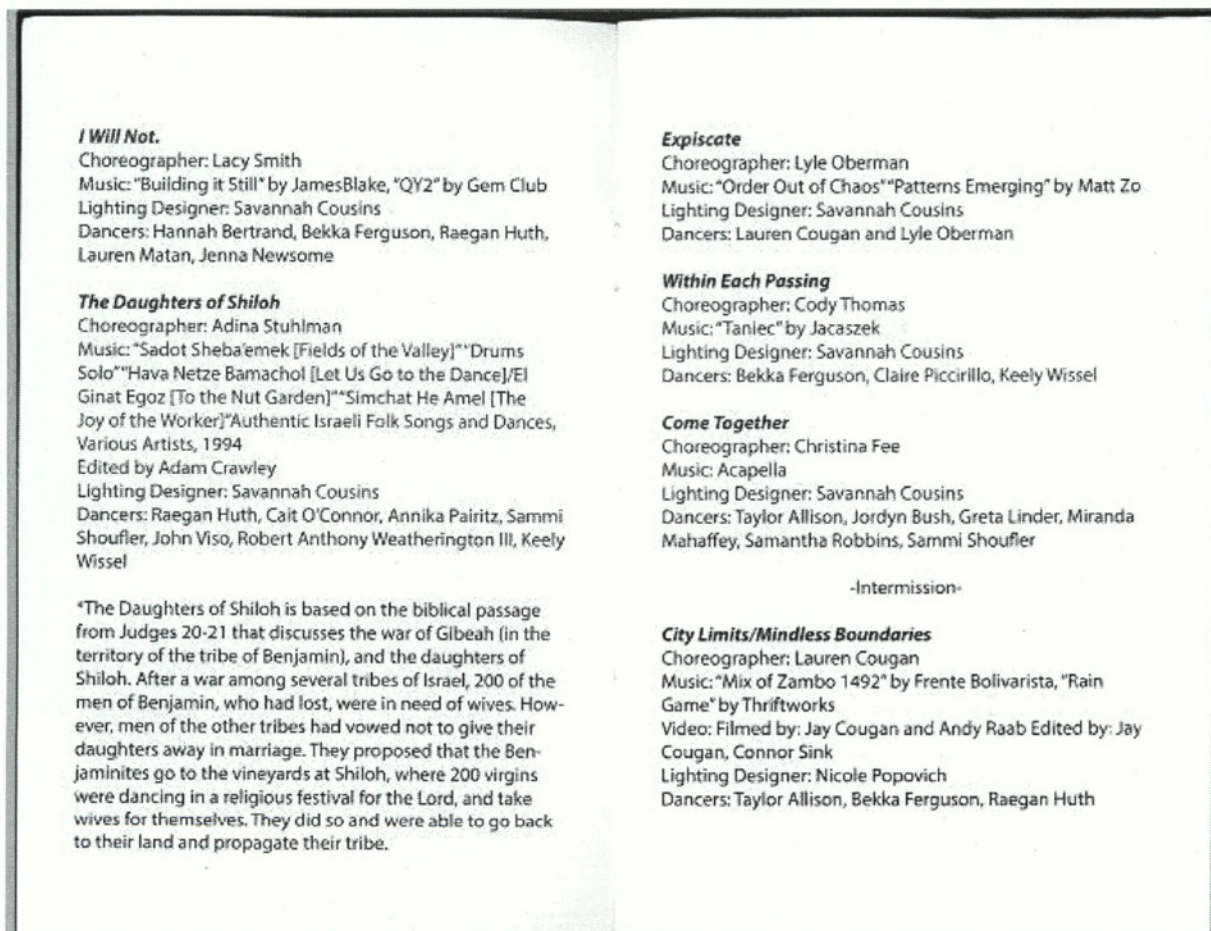


Fig. 3 – Production Information for Author's Work (second piece listed)



#### **Equilibrium**

Choreographer: Samantha Conte  
Music: Original Composition by Adam Crawley  
Lighting Designer: Amanda Boldt  
Dancers: Mallorie Baker and Caitlyn O'Connor

#### **Minutiae**

Choreographer: Emily Utz  
Music: "Kon" by Lyube  
Lighting Designer: Nicole Popovich  
Dancers: Taylor Allison, Lauren Matan, Jenna Newsome

#### **Coping**

Choreographer: Rachael Wiczorek  
Music: "Contentance" by Marsen Jules  
Lighting Designer: Amanda Boldt  
Dancers: Ella Donovan, Kailyn Kelley, Jaddyn Olivas, Annika Pairitz, Claire Piccirillo, John Viso

**Samantha Conte** was exposed to choreography through different mediums, including observing processes, participating in the creation of new works, and creating her own. During high school she was able to create a work, *Inferno*, on a student company, which traveled to Montreal through Regional Dance America. She was awarded the Monticello Award for Emerging Choreography and received a scholarship to attend the National Choreographic Intensive. There, she learned and expanded her choreographic knowledge from Nelly van Bommel and Rob Wood. She continues to develop her choreographic voice through each project she creates.

**Lauren Cougan** hails from Indianapolis, Indiana. She has been dancing for the past seven years, three of which have been at Ball State University in pursuit of her Bachelor of Fine Arts in dance. Her most recent choreography work was a piece in *The Rendering of Eight Visualizations* for the junior choreography showcase. As Lauren approaches her senior year at Ball State University, her interest in contemporary and organic movement forms has intensified and she plans to continue exploring this realm of dance.

**Christina Fee** originally from Schaumburg, Illinois, is currently working on her BFA in dance at Ball State University. She has performed with Inside Chicago Dance's youth training program along with dancing in River North Dance Chicago's summer training program. Her emphasis in dance are the styles of jazz and tap and she aspires to work on a cruise line post-graduation. After years of traveling and enjoying her youth as a performer, she wishes to return to her biggest passion of sharing her love for dance with children.

Fig. 4 – Last Three Pieces and Choreographer Bios



**Lyle Oberman** is psyched to be working on this year's senior choreography projects! Over the past four years, she has been featured in Ball State Dance Theatre's *The Nutcracker*, *All You Need is Love*, and last year's immersive dance project *Dancing Towards Change*. Institutions that Lyle has trained at include the San Francisco Conservatory of Dance, Kibbutz Contemporary Dance Company, and American Ballet Theatre. Follow her on Instagram at @LifeofLyle!

**Lacy Smith** is originally from Fort Wayne. During her time here at Ball State she has choreographed for last semester's *The Rendering of 8 Visualizations*, various architecture collaborations, as well as assistant choreographer for *Hairspray*. Lacy will most likely be moving to Chicago after graduation where she hopes to find a balance between both concert and commercial professional dance.

**Adina Stuhlman** is a B.S. dance major from Chicago, IL. Credits include ensemble roles in *The Best of BSDT: Past and Present*, and performances of new choreography by Sidra Bell. She choreographed *Développé* for Works in Motion Spring 2016. Adina has applied for a Fulbright Grant to continue her dance studies in Israel next year. Adina is excited to have created this work as her Senior Thesis for Honors.

**Cody Thomas** is a senior dance major born and raised in Indianapolis, IN. He started dancing when he was nine years old at Stage One Dance Academy. His love for performing continued throughout college at Ball State University where he has been involved in many main stage shows such as, *Oklahoma!*, *Hairspray*, and *Swing!*. He has won many awards for his work at Cole Dance Academy here in Muncie and is excited to share his first concert piece in Korsgaard Dance Studio. Finally, Cody would like to thank his friends and family for their continuous love and support in everything he does.

**Emily Utz** is from Westfield, Indiana and is incredibly excited to share her work. She has most recently performed in *Swing!* and has also been a part of *The Nutcracker*, *Best of BSDT: Past and Present*, and *Dancing Toward Change*. This is her second choreographic opportunity, her first being "Librarian" for the Festival of the Word and Dance at Ball State.

**Rachael Wieczorek** is originally from Chicago, IL. Throughout her time at Ball State she has received a multitude of opportunities to perform and choreograph. Within the last year she has choreographed for last semester's *The Rendering of 8 Visualizations*, various architecture collaborations, and most recently *Party Fools: The Immersive Ballet Project*. In the spring, she is very excited to be traveling to New York to work with Sidra Bell and fellow Ball State students to create an original concert. She has been inspired by themes of action and reactionary movement developed through physical and metaphorical touch and how these principles affect the quality of movement and where movement is initiated from.

Fig. 5 – Choreographer Bios. Author's is Third.

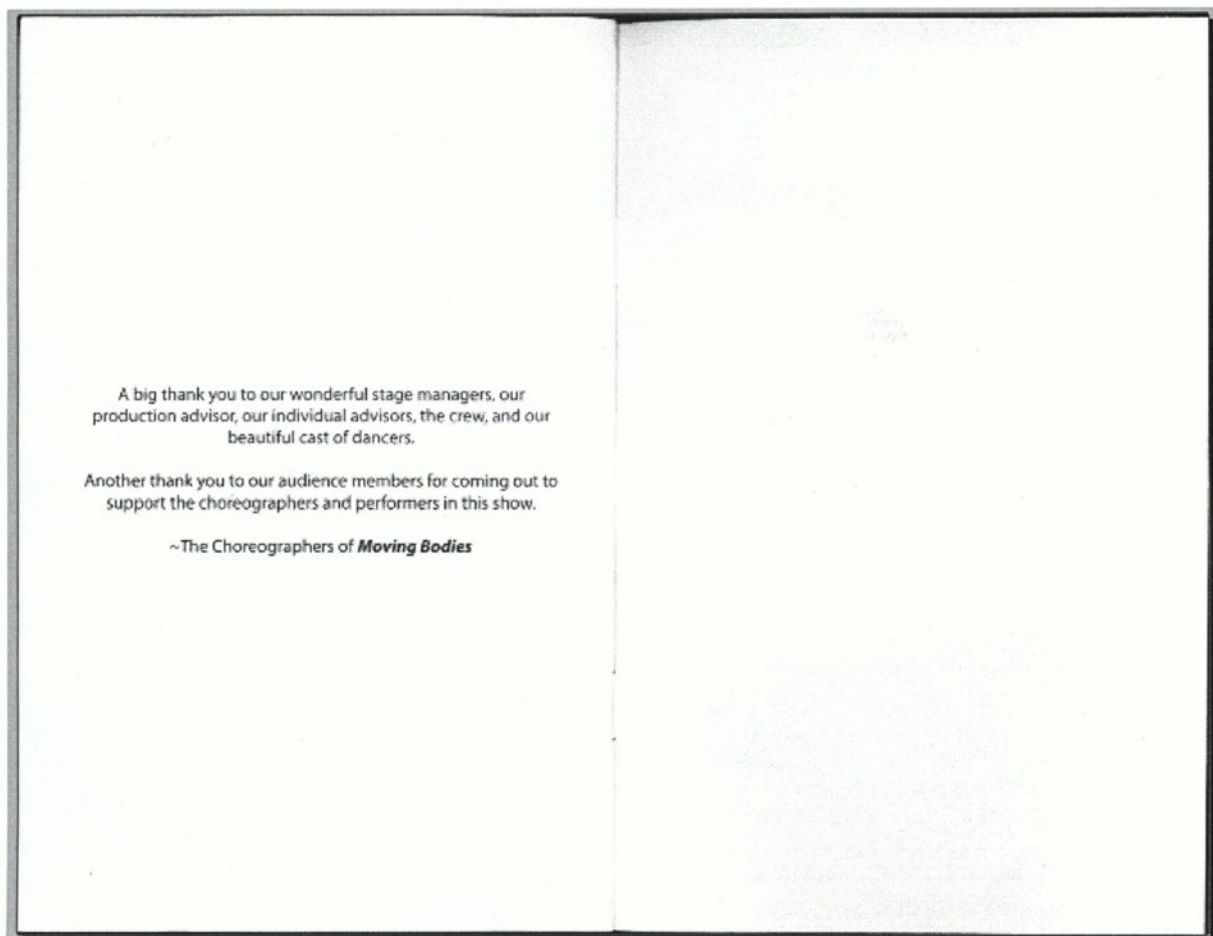


Fig. 6 – Choreographer Thank You

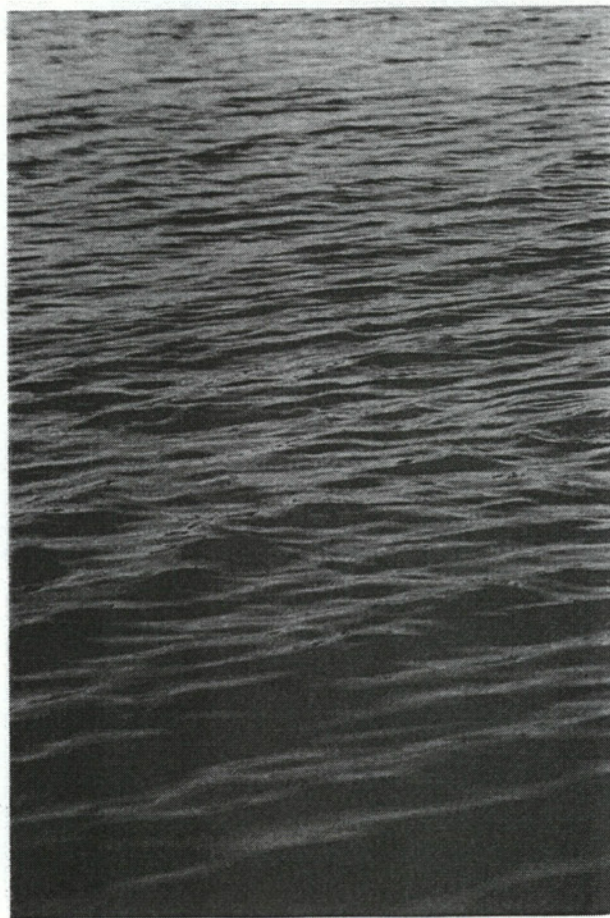


Fig. 7 – Back of Program



Poster

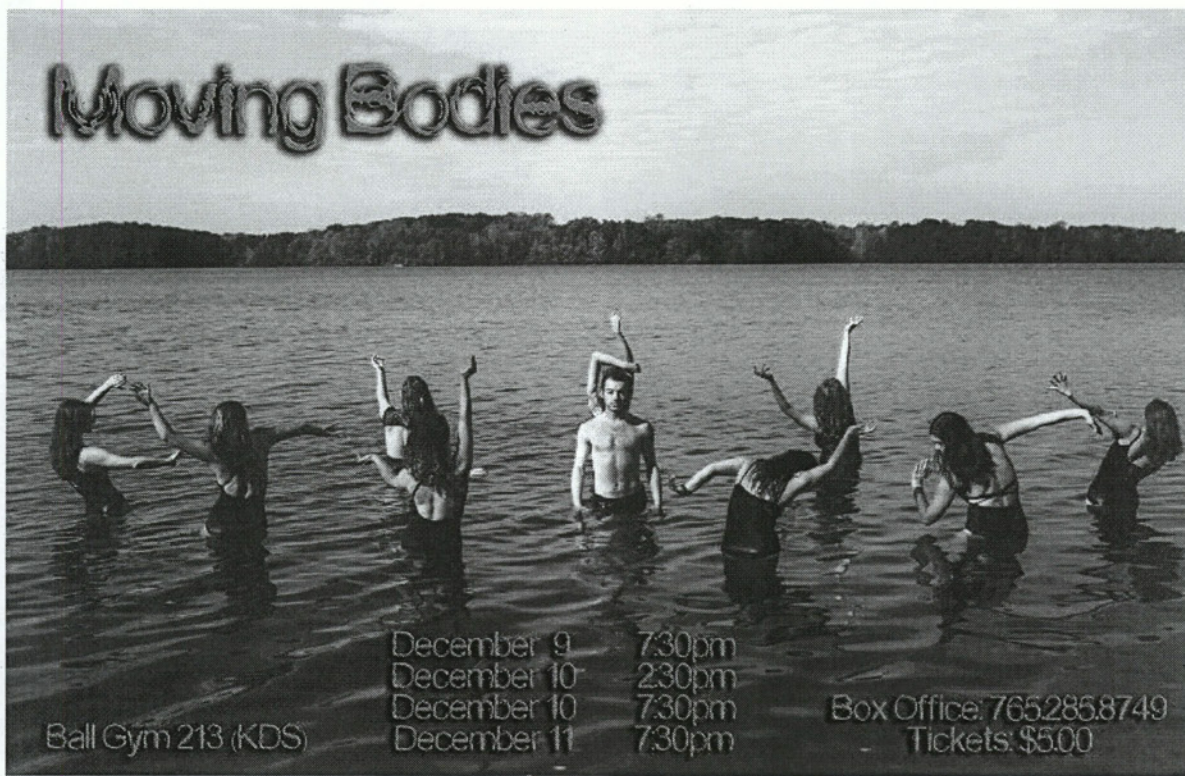


Fig. 8 – Production Poster

Photo Courtesy of Madeline Curtis-Long

(The Sunday Dec. 11<sup>th</sup> performance took place at 2:30, not 7:30)

Archive Photos



Fig. 9 – Opening Scene

Fig. 10 – Capture Scene







Fig. 11 – Acceptance Scene  
All Archive Photos Courtesy of Kip Shawger



## Reflection

(This paper was turned in as an assignment for THEA 434 – The Senior Choreography Projects class. In it I answer questions from my advisor and reflect on the process of the class.)

Advisor Questions:

- 1) What was biggest challenge you faced in creation process?
- 2) How has this project helped you grow as an artist?
- 3) What was pros and cons of your cast of dancers if any
- 4) Looking back would you change anything about your process
- 5) What is your personal impression of the piece
- 6) What do you hope audiences gather from your project

Overall, the process of Senior Choreography was a great learning experience for me in how to work with music and teach choreography. I feel that my piece developed into something cohesive, that tells the story I wanted to convey. The style of piece shifted from what I had originally thought of, but I think the choreography that developed worked well with the story.

There were many challenges I faced going into this creation of this piece. Since I had not taken Choreography 2 I lacked some of the skills the other seniors had in regards to choreography. In addition, I had never worked with so many dancers, seven in total, in the creation of my own choreography. I think the biggest challenge I faced was figuring out counts for my piece. The music changes so many times, with multiple songs and tempo changes, that there was no consistent driving beat to easily count. In addition, my dancers kept questioning my counts, and seemed to lack trust in what I gave them. This was very hard for me, as I already know I have trouble with counts in general. Taking the time to sit down and write out every single count for the whole piece was very helpful, and I now know that I should have done that at

the beginning of the creation process, rather than towards the end. If I could go back, I would have done this and listened to my music more before teaching the choreography.

This project has helped me grow as an artist in a variety of ways. I have discovered new ways of working in order to create and teach choreography. I have learned what does and does not work in developing choreography and in teaching it. While I certainly have not settled on a specific style with my choreography I am glad that explored a more folk and balletic style of dance. I feel that I have grown because I was able to create something very different from what is normally done here at Ball State. I took the idea of connecting my Judaism and dance and managed to develop a piece that truly mixes them together. This piece has forced me to develop my counting skills, and while I think I still have some ways to go, I feel that I have improved in that area.

My dancers made some very good suggestions throughout the choreographic process. I also let them make some choices regarding some small sections of the dance, and I think they did this well. On the other hand, they questioned and challenged my choreography and counting quite a few times. One dancer in particular, really frustrated me with how much she countered what I told her to do. There were times when I gave choreography that I knew did not go precisely with the music, yet I gave very specific numbers of steps to take, but my dancers struggled with not dancing to specific counts. It was a good challenge having so many dancers. I found it hard to be able to focus on all the dancers at once, especially in the beginning of the process.

I hope that my audience can understand the trajectory of the story. I don't expect that my audience will make the connection to the specific passages on the Daughters of Shiloh in the

book of Judges (20-21) that the piece is based on, but I do hope that they understand some of the references to Jewish dance themes (the circle, lifting of the married couple, the grapevine, etc.).

My piece tells a story. The work doesn't look like anything else I have seen here at Ball State, which I think is a good thing. It is also quite different from the work of the other seniors. Some of the transitions in the piece could be smoother, but overall, I'm proud of the piece that I have created. I am very happy with the piece that I created. I feel that I have accomplished what I set out to do and am proud to present this work as my Honors thesis and Senior Capstone.



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